

Message Text

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66/42

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 IO-10 AID-05 IGA-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-10 OMB-01 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 SAM-01 OPIC-06 EB-07 /115 W

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R 091432Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3852

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUANDA

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 4135

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MRN 4135 VICE 5135)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, AO, PO, CG, BE

SUBJECT: ADMIRAL COUTINHO DENOUNCES FNLA,;SUPPORTS MPLA

REF: BRUSSELS 4045

1. INTERVIEW OF PORTUGUESE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MEMBER, ADMIRAL ROSA COUTINHO, ON ANGOLA IS REPORTED BY "SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT" IN MAY 7 ISSUE OF BELGIAN WEEKLY SPECIAL. INTERVIEW FOLLOWS BY ONLY FEW DAYS THAT CARRIED IN LE SOIR (REFTEL).

2. IN INTERVIEW COUTINHO IS QUOTED AS STATING FLATLY THAT HIS SENTIMENTS IN ANGOLA LIE WITH MPLA, WHICH HE CONSIDERS TO BE LIBERATION MOVEMENT MOST PROGRESSIVE AND MOST REPRESENTATIVE OF ANGOLAN PEOPLE. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT IN APPROVING JOINT PLATFORM WITH ANGOLAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATED THAT IT CONSIDERED ALL THREE TO BE REPRESENTATIVE. WHEN CORRESPONDENT POINTED OUT THAT OF THREE MOVEMENTS, ONLY MPLA HAD REPRESENTATIVE IN PORTUGAL, COUTINHO REPLIED THAT UNITA
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ALSO WOULD SOON HAVE "ANTENNA" THERE.

3. ON SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE CIVIL WAR IN ANGOLA, COUTINHO INDICATED THAT HE WAS OPTIMISTIC WAR COULD BE AVOIDED, SINCE EXISTENCE OF THREE MOVEMENTS CONSTITUTES " FACTOR OF EQUILIBRIUM". HE OBSERVED ALSO THAT PORTUGAL COULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ANGOLA UNTIL FEBRUARY 26, 1976.

4. ASKED HIS OPINION OF FNLA, COUTINHO IS QUOTED AS FOLLOWS:
" IN MY OPINION, HOLDEN IS AN AGENT OF INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM, WHICH FURNISHES HIM ARMS, MERCENARIES, AND MONEY. HE REPRESENTS NOT THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA BUT ONLY ONE TRIBE; THE FNLA BASES ITS STRENGTH ONLY ON BRUTE FORCE AND, MOREOVER, IS NOT REALLY IMPLANTED IN ANGOLA. WHY DOES HOLDEN REMAIN IN KINSHASA?" COUTINHO CONCLUDES THAT SOLUTION IN ANGOLA WOULD BE EASY IF COUNTRY WERE NOT SO RICH AND "INTERNATIONAL POWERS" DID NOT INTERFERE.

5. COMMENTING ON CABINDA, COUTINHO SAID ENCLAVE WOULD GAIN INDEPENDENCE AS PART OF ANGOLA, NOT AS SEPARATE STATE.

6. IN ACCOMPANYING EDITORIAL COMMENT ON COUTINHO INTERVIEW, FRANCIS MONHEIM REPORTS THAT ZAIRIAN PRESIDENT MOBUTU RECENTLY ACCUSED COUTINHO OF BEING PARTISAN IN ANGOLAN AFFAIRS AND OF MISUNDERSTANDING AFRICAN REALITIES. MONHEIM PLACES COUTINHO AMONG THOSE WHO SEEK TO DECIDE DESTINY OF ANGOLA WITHOUT TAKING ACCOUNT OF DESIRES OF ANGOLANS THEMSELVES AND SAYS COUTINHO, LIKE MPLA LEADER NETO, IS "MAN OF THE SOVIETS". FIRESTONE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, PRESS CONFERENCES, LIBERATION FRONTS, DEPENDENCIES, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BRUSSE04135
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750163-1118
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750563/aaaacfji.tel
Line Count: 87
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BRUSSELS 4045
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 SEP 2003 by buchantr>; APPROVED <16 JAN 2004 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ADMIRAL COUTINHO DENOUNCES FNLA,;SUPPORTS MPLA
TAGS: PFOR, AO, PO, CG, BE, FNLA, MPLA, (COUTINO, ROSA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006